

Intimations.

NOTICE.

A. S. WATSON & CO., LTD.

HAVE JUST RECEIVED THEIR ANNUAL SUPPLY

of

LAWN GRASS SEED

and

SWEET CORN,

for immediate sowing.

THE HONGKONG DISPENSARY.

Hongkong, 22nd March, 1888.

The Hongkong Telegraph

HONGKONG, TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 1888.

The importance of the functions of Interpretation in the Civil Service of Hongkong cannot be over-estimated. At least seven-eighths of the population of the Island speak Cantonese or other Southern Chinese dialects; the remaining eighth is composed of people speaking, in the sum, all the languages of Europe, with a fair sprinkling of those of Asia. English, of course, is spoken by the majority of this latter eighth; the remainder of it either speak our language or understand it sufficiently for ordinary purposes; that is, they are well enough versed in that wretched mongrel monstrosity termed "pidgin English"—an ungrammatical conglomeration of vocabularies and constructions culled from all manner of linguistic sources, and forming a jingling jargon as execrable as the *lingua franca* prevalent in the Levant and on the Mediterranean shores generally. The native section of the community quickly acquire remarkable fluency in this bastard English; yet, at the Magistracy and in the Supreme Court, we frequently see these

very men glib and fluent enough behind their counters, require the help of the interpreter; in fact, although apparently able to converse in English, refusing to speak otherwise than in their native language. Interpreters then are a strict and unavoidable necessity in this Eastern modern Babel of ours. Every one will see the danger of employing in such positions men who have a mere superficial acquaintance with the prevalent dialects. Specialisation in linguistic attainments, as in every other branch of human knowledge, is the prominent idea of the present time. A fair acquaintance with several languages, even though belonging to different families, is well within the limits of possibility; but without knowing the grammars of these languages, without being thoroughly conversant with the various laws on which these grammars are based, all true comparison between their idioms and special modes of expression, and consequently, all trustworthy, reliable interpretation, are quite out of the question. We would almost lay it down as a cardinal principle for guidance that all oral interpretation should be carried out by those who speak the language dealt with from birth, or at least, who are so thoroughly familiar with it that they unconsciously think in it. We first learn to speak a foreign language; afterwards to understand others. Speaking is comparatively easy, because we are always at liberty to avoid a word or phrase that is unintelligible; but, when that word or phrase is used by others, retreat is impossible.

We should like to know how many Civil Servants in this Colony are capable of understanding a rapid conversation taken at hazard between native Chinese. We are quite certain that we could number those able to undertake such a feat, on the fingers of one hand, and then have several fingers to spare. And yet such ready facility is absolutely necessary in an efficient interpreter. We will endeavour to point out a few of the essential qualifications which every good interpreter should possess. He should be a fluent, easy speaker, able to divine the incomplete meaning or the half-uttered sentence of momentary embarrassment, stimulating and awakening his native listener by unceasing variety of tone and gesture; ever on the alert. He is a word-juggler; his ears are ever stretched towards the end of a phrase that his mouth has already begun to translate, seeking to discover obscurities of meaning, to read thoughts in looks; he should without difficulty be able to detect the servility, perfidy, dissimulation and cunning that he is sure to encounter in the course of his duties—all hidden and veiled more or less successfully according to the character of the witness he has in hand; he appreciates exactly the value of words and phrases, weighs the meanings of synonyms to the smallest fraction of an ounce, and measures the dubious and

puzzling shades of the moodless, tenseless, flexionless Chinese verb with all the nicety and accuracy of a careful mathematician; he should be equally conversant with Chinese and English, and be able to pass from either to the other with equal ease and confidence. Moreover, he should be a dignified and well paid servant, as becoming the heavy responsibilities which rest in him. Watch the native witness, and you will soon see whom he fears most: not the judge, nor the magistrate, but the interpreter.

It is horribly difficult to speak idiomatically, accurately and smoothly in any Chinese dialect; such a task is the work of a life-time. Those who have not attempted the subject can have no faintest idea of the countless stumbling-blocks that stand in the way. Without doubt or exaggeration, it is one of the most difficult linguistic tasks that could be set. Not only has the language no grammar in the accepted Western sense of the word, but it has *tones*—those gymnastic vocal inflections which to the unpractised ear convey no meaning whatever, but which to the initiated and trained convey differences which mean everything; final particles alone, interrogative, affirmative, negative, assertive, and the like, are a very nightmare to the ardent and enthusiastic beginner. No study could offer more numerous or more appalling obstructions; the pathway is never smooth; it bristles with difficulties at the very outset, it is thorny to the very end. We are not speaking enigmatically when we say that the character or book language is easier to grapple with than colloquial. We could give several notable instances to exemplify this fact. We are acquainted with people in this Colony who, in a not altogether incorrect sense, might be termed Chinese scholars, who can read ordinary native literature, ancient and modern with fair ease, but who openly confess their inability to sustain a conversation on every day topics in Cantonese, who in point of fact, candidly admit that they are utterly and wholly incapable of distinguishing one tone from another—who as interpreters would be worse than useless. Those of our readers who are in any way competent to judge in the matter, will fully concur with us in our statement as to the relative difficulty of the written and spoken native language.

An Interpretation Corps ought to be immediately organized. It is a standing, inexcusable disgrace that such a body is not already in existence. The want of such a body of public servants has been sorely felt on several recent occasions; and this want must continue to assert itself as our relations with the Chinese improve, and as our intercourse with them increases. To begin with, it should mainly consist of Eurasians, or of English lads who have been brought up in the colony, but who in every case should be thoroughly familiar with the spoken Chinese dialects, and capable of understanding the meaning of the most rapidly uttered phrases, without which an interpreter is of no value whatever. They should be thoroughly and carefully trained in both English and Chinese. Their whole course of training should extend over a period of four or five years, two at least of which should be spent in the interior, where not only should a more perfect acquaintance with colloquial be cultivated, but the easier classics and ordinary newspaper literature should be assiduously studied. The remainder of the training should be spent in Hongkong; and inasmuch as these youths would be Government servants they should, while in Hongkong, be attached as students to the Central School, where they should be afforded every facility for receiving a sound grounding in English subjects. Periodic examinations, half-yearly, say, should test the progress of the student, and the initial salary should be modified by the total number of marks gained throughout the course of study. The chief and second positions in such a department ought to be held by English officials, whose salaries should be in proportion with the difficulties to be overcome in acquiring the requisite and suitable knowledge that such positions demand.

We were extremely pleased to note the Hon. A. P. MacEwen's question on the Interpretation question at the last meeting of the Legislative Council, and we trust that the honourable member is not going to leave the matter until he has effected some radical reform; but we were greatly disappointed with the unsatisfactory reply which it elicited. We give His Excellency Sir Grosvenor D'Oyly-John's credit for seeing much farther ahead than our last Governor, and we sincerely hope that he is giving this matter his most earnest and serious attention. This is not the first time that we have spoken about the want of proper encouragement on the part of the Government towards its servants in the matter of Chinese studies. Able and competent men

have, on more than one occasion, been practically driven out of the Civil Service by this regrettable lack of fostering encouragement. It must be fully six months since the Commissioners drew up their report on the subject of interpretation, a report which, at the time, we criticised at no inconsiderable length; yet, up to date, no active steps have been taken to remove the grave defects it complained of. Such dilatoriness is positively shameful; one of the young men favourably mentioned in the report has already quitted the Civil Service for another, where his special attainments are certain to meet with quicker and ampler reward. We ourselves frankly own that this sloth-like movement is altogether incomprehensible to us; and no possible object is to be gained by it. We have previously drawn attention to the significant but not very generally known facts that the cadet system originally instituted to supply the colony with an efficient staff of interpreters has failed to fulfil its purpose; and that non-cadets are offered no real inducements to undertake the work. We would again point out the discreditable and anomalous inconsistency of expecting men to tackle such a barren and difficult study as Chinese, without hope of future recompense.

Hongkong stands absolutely alone in the contempt and indifference with which it regards the action of its servants in this all-important respect. In India, in both the Civil and Military Services, a knowledge of vernacular tongues carries with it increased substantive pay; in Algiers the study of Arabic and Berber dialects is similarly promoted by the French authorities; the same holds good in Tonquin; in Egypt too, high pecuniary rewards are offered to officers and soldiers alike to induce them to gain some acquaintance with Arabic and kindred languages; in Burma, our latest acquired possession, the Indian Government actually offered a premium of £200 sterling to any of its servants for the acquisition of Chinese, with the prospect of subsequent valuable appointments; in the Straits Settlements, colloquial proficiency in Malay or Chinese brings with it increased salary; at the Cape, a knowledge of the Kafir or Zulu tongues is substantially rewarded; in the neighbouring Dutch colonies, knowledge of the native languages enhances an officer's value in the eyes of his Government; in the Imperial Chinese Customs Service, the greater a man's attainments are in this respect, the greater are his chances of early and rapid promotion. Such marks of approval are only just and right, since the increased knowledge referred to in each particular instance necessarily brings with it added usefulness. Promotion in the Hongkong Civil Service is the nominal reward for proficiency in Chinese studies; we repeat, the nominal, not the actual reward; for we have instances in our mind's eye, of officers who have been diligent servants for quite a number of years, and who are likewise fair and capable students of Chinese, in spite of the constant discouragement which they have uniformly encountered, and yet who are, for all practical purposes no better off than when they first entered the Colony. This is plainly not as it should be; and our excellent and enlightened Governor should do all that is in his power to wipe away these serious blemishes. The planets are the most brilliant objects in the midnight sky; the firmament of our local Civil Service is set with both fixed stars and planets, those who shine with their own, and those who shine with reflected light; unfortunately the latter class is by far the more numerous and prominent of the two.

TELEGRAMS.

(Router.)

POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE.

LONDON, 20th April.
The House of Commons has read a second time the Local Government Bill. It is stated that Mr. Chamberlain has resigned the National Liberal Club and it is hinted that he will possibly enter the Cabinet.

LOCAL AND GENERAL.

THE British gunboat *Esper*, Lieut. Commander R. Y. Smith, arrived yesterday from Canton.

THE agent of the Messageries Maritimes Co. courteously informs us that the Company's steamship *Diemah*, with the next French mail, left Saigon yesterday at 11 p.m. for this port.

An Emergency meeting of St. John Lodge, No. 618, S.C., will be held in Freemasons' Hall, Zetland Street, on Friday, the 27th instant, at 5 for 5.30 p.m. precisely. Visiting brethren are cordially invited.

We are informed by the Agents (Messrs. Arnold, Karberg & Co.) that the China Shippers' Mutual S. M. Co. steamer *Oppach*, from Liverpool, left Singapore for this port last night, and may be expected on or about the 29th inst.

We would draw attention to the alterations in the departure of the Pacific Mail steamer for San Francisco via Yokohama. The *City of Sydney* will be despatched on Wednesday, May 2nd, at 3 p.m.; and the *O. & O. S. S. Co.'s Opash*, on Thursday, May 10th, at the same hour.

Mrs. Stovall, a native of Kentucky, appeared before Justice Cress at Nanaimo yesterday, and applied for admission to the rights of a British subject. His Lordship admitted the lady, and congratulated her on being the first woman in British Columbia to become a naturalized British subject.

THE German Liberal content that bills which Emperor William's father signed cannot now be signed by Emperor Frederick. Politicians are greatly disturbed.

THERE will be an Emergency meeting of Zetland Lodge, No. 525, in Freemasons' Hall, Zetland Street, on Thursday, the 26th inst., at 8.30 for 9 p.m. precisely. Visiting brethren are cordially invited.

THE *Messageries Maritimes* are constructing at La Ciotat a new steamer of improved design, named the *Australien*, 500 feet long. Her boilers will carry 238 pounds steam pressure to the square inch.

THE Italian Government has just made a contract for five sea-going torpedo-boats to have a speed of 26½ knots, and for five to have a speed of 23 knots. If the faster vessels answer expectations ten will be ordered in all.

THE Fire Brigade competition was concluded this afternoon on the Praya road in rear of the City Hall buildings. We hear the prize-winners are legion, and that the distribution of the trophies awarded them will be held in the course of this week.

WE hear the cargo-boat men on strike have sent in a petition to H. E. the Governor through the Registrar General, setting forth their reasons for refusing to be photographed and asking that they may be allowed to dispense with the recent injunction. Nothing has so far transpired as to His Excellency's decision on the matter.

TWO young Chinamen described as boarding-house runners but whose enterprise appears to have exceeded their sagacity were to-day charged before Mr. Woodhouse with boarding the steamer *Achille* before she had made fast to her buoy and thereby infringing one of the most important harbour ordinances. The prisoners did not deny the hard impeachment, and were fined ten dollars each.

THE British cruiser *Laender* arrived at Kobe on the 13th inst. from Yokohama. The U.S. corvette *Junia* left Kobe on the 13th inst. for Nagasaki. The German man-of-war *Zis-march*, *Carola* and *Sophie* left Kobe for Yokohama on the 15th inst. The French gunboat *Paracou* arrived at Yokohama from Kobe on the 13th inst. The U.S. frigate *Brooklyn*, which arrived at Shanghai from Amoy, reports experiencing rough weather up the coast.

SAYS THE *Japan Mail*—The Communications Department notifies that the Captain of the steamer *Parthia* has reported that on the 20th of March at 7 p.m. the vessel touched a shoal situated to the south of the Kanabuse Buoy in the Straits of Nagato. As the steamer was running at a considerable speed, it was not possible to take accurate bearings, but, roughly speaking, the shoal is about 200 feet from the Kanabuse Buoy. It is presumed that the shoal is a new one, similar to that of Tobigau, but investigations will be made, and in the meantime navigators are warned to be cautious.

THE *Japan Mail* says that a Japanese Government service who wishes to live outside of Tsukiji can do so in the easiest way by becoming the employee of a Japanese. A simple form, filled in by the latter, and submitted to the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and to the Governor of Tokyo, does the rest. If, then, the difficulty is so slight, why not remove it altogether? The *Japan Mail* says it has heard of a good many funny proposals by amateur politicians in that country, but for pure simple-mindedness the above suggestion certainly stood alone. If its author would only take the trouble of learning a little about his country's treaty relations, he would probably not be very long in finding out the absurdity of the step he has advocated.

DURING the last year the grand total of Metropolitan (London) Charities amounted to £4,179,566 amongst which the largest sums were 24 Foreign Missions £285,791; 56 Home Missions £162,669; 158 Pensions and Institutions for the aged £438,889; 18 Institutions for Education £414,543; 17 General Hospitals £325,405; 93 Institutions for General Relief £309,208; 4 Bible Societies £203,637; 13 Home and Foreign Missions £230,637; 100 Voluntary Homes £165,495; 56 Orphanages £179,013; 31 Miscellaneous Special Hospitals £39,189; 8 Consumption Hospitals £74,667; 71 Institutions for Reformation and Prevention £75,209; 19 Institutions for Protection £73,253; Charities for the Blind £70,640; 45 Institutions for Social Improvement £64,164; and still a host of others with sums to their credit of from £60,000 down to £5,000. The enormous sum total may be said to average about one pound per head per annum of the total population of London.

SENSATIONS are rare in this little sleepy country town, but we have just been appalled by one of a terrible nature. The burning of the theatre here is only second in horror to the destruction of the Opera House, Comique, and the Banquet Theatre, which was destroyed by fire on Tuesday night, is a play house run on the French model, and is always crowded, because this is the only place of public amusement worth speaking of, and is very well managed, so far as entertainments go.

No detailed list of casualties is yet furnished by the municipality. It is said that some Americans and not a few English must have lost their lives, but on this point nothing positive is yet known. We hear of 120 people being burned. This is probably an underestimate. All the after-horors of the Opera Comique and Banquet Theatre, which were destroyed by fire on Tuesday night, is a play house run on the French model, and is always crowded, because this is the only place of public amusement worth speaking of, and is very well managed, so far as entertainments go.

NEWS BY THE AMERICAN MAIL.

The subjoined items of news ex the *San Pablo* are extracted from Japan and Shanghai papers:—

PARIS, March 18th.
General Boulanger to-day departed unannounced for Clermont-Ferrand. *La Liberté* says the Minister of War has given General Boulanger permission to reside in Paris.

The French Committee met at Deputy Laguerre's residence to-day, and prepared and signed a manifesto to electors of the departments of Alsace and Bouches-du-Rhône, calling upon them to vote for General Boulanger as the representative of public liberties and democratic reforms at home, and the dignity of the nation abroad.

CITY OF MEXICO (via Galveston), March 18th.
Recent parties visiting the volcano of Popocatepetl report increasing activity in the crater with clouds of smoke and sulphurous fumes. Reports from Central America show that several volcanoes are unmistakably in renewed activity.

A banquet to General Bragg, the United States Minister, will be given by the American residents on Wednesday next.

LONDON, March 18th.
Mr. Marriott, the Judge Advocate General, has resigned, finding that the new duties imposed upon him interfered with his private business.

Mrs. Stovall, a native of Kentucky, appeared before Justice Cress at Nanaimo yesterday, and applied for admission to the rights of a British subject. His Lordship admitted the lady, and congratulated her on being the first woman in British Columbia to become a naturalized British subject.

THE German Liberal content that bills which Emperor William's father signed cannot now be signed by Emperor Frederick. Politicians are greatly disturbed.

PARIS, March 19th.
Messieurs Vacher and Laport, members of the Chamber of Deputies, have joined the Boulanger National Protest Committee.
At most of the Communist meetings held yesterday in celebration of the proclamation of the Commune, General Boulanger was denounced. The Radical Congress, Department of Aude, has rejected the proposal to run General Boulanger as a candidate for the Chamber of Deputies.

In the Chamber of Deputies to-day, Dr. Cassagnac demanded permission to question the Government in regard to the case of General Boulanger.
Premier Tirard fixed the discussion for tomorrow, because he said, the Government had decided to adopt fresh measures in the Boulanger matter.

BERLIN, March 19th.
Emperor Frederick gave special audience to-day to the representatives of China, Japan and Turkey.

NEW YORK, March 21st.
The *Sun's* Berlin special of March 20 says: "The populace make a great demonstration over the new Crown Prince, and his name is being discussed in all the councils of Europe as the coming 'firebrand.' He hates the English and the Jews, and many Germans reflect his opinions. Once, at San Remo, while visiting his sick father, the royal party went to church. His mother attempted to take William's arm, but he rudely put her aside, saying that he represented the Emperor and would walk alone. A cartoon published there today depicts William armed with a sword, climbing up the throne, while his father waves him off, saying, 'Not yet!'"

There was a dreadful fire last night at the Banquet Theatre in Oporto. It was a repetition of the history of all theatre-fires. The house was crowded to suffocation. There were inadequate means of exit, and in the terrible struggles the people made in their efforts to reach the street scores were trampled under foot and smothered to death. At least 100 people were burned to death, so far as can be found out at present. The examination of the smouldering ruins and the actual loss of life will not be known for some days. The third tier of boxes and the gallery above were packed with people, and only a few escaped.

The debris is surrounded by weeping people whose relatives were asphyxiated or burned to death. The hospital and private houses are filled with persons severely injured. Many were fatally injured in their struggle to reach the street. Some who succeeded in getting out safely died afterwards from vomiting blood. Many frightened people leaped from windows and were killed by the fall. Only a partial view of the auditorium and boxes has been made yet, but the firemen and the citizens' relief corps are constantly bringing out charred bodies. So far as is yet known, the loss of life was entirely among the audience, and all the company escaped.

The fire was caused by some disarrangement of the gas in the flies during the third act. The flames swept over the upper part of the house and, giving the people in the galleries no chance to escape, while the spectators on the lower tiers reached the street in comparative safety. Some body shut off the gas shortly after the fire was discovered in the hope of checking its spread, but it only left the theatre and exits in almost total darkness, and increased the panic.

The light-woodwork of the galleries was soon a roaring blaze. All the doors of the theatre opened inward, and all were closed when the alarm was given. The theatre holds 2,200 people, and the box office was refusing admission before the performance, so that it is known the loss of life was very large.

At nine o'clock to-night dispatches received here, 200 miles from Oporto, say that the police have removed the remains of eighty bodies, and the work of searching the ruins is only just begun. The municipal authorities have put a large gang of men at work. The charred bodies of a man and a woman were found in a box, locked in a close embrace. They are believed to be bodies of Don Sorilla and his wife. He was one of the wealthiest merchants in the city. None of the remains can be positively identified.

The search is going on all night by the aid of torches, and the scenes among people looking for missing relatives in the ruins are heart-rending. Private information received here says that very few people in the galleries escaped, and the loss of life is twice as large as reported.

THE NEW UNITED STATES TREATY WITH CHINA.

The *Shanghai Mercury* publishes the following leading clauses of the new Chinese Treaty that has been negotiated by Secretary Bayard and the Chinese Minister:—

Article 1. The high contracting parties agree that, for the purpose of settling the difficulties that have arisen from the exchange of the ratification of this convention, the coming, except under the conditions hereinafter specified, of Chinese labourers to the United States shall be absolutely prohibited.

Art. 2. The preceding article shall not apply to the return to the United States of any Chinese labourer who has a lawful wife, child, or parent, in the United States, or property therein of the value of \$5,000, or debts of like amount due him, or pending law suits, or who has been employed by a Chinese labourer shall, before leaving the United States, deposit, as a condition of his return, with the Collector of Customs of the district from which he departs, a full description in writing of his family or property, or debts, as aforesaid, and shall be furnished by said Collector, with such certificate of his right to return under this treaty, as the laws of the United States may now or hereafter prescribe; not inconsistent with the provisions of this treaty, and should the written description aforesaid be proved to be false the right of return thereunder, or of continued residence after return, shall in each case be forfeited, and such right of return to the United States shall be exercised within one year from the date of leaving the United States. But such right to return to the United States may be extended for an additional period not to exceed one year, in cases where, by reason of sickness or other causes of disability beyond his control, such Chinese labourer be rendered unable to sooner return, which facts shall be fully reported to the Chinese Consul, at the port of departure, and by him certified to the satisfaction of the Collector of the port at which such Chinese subject shall land in the United States.

Art. 3. The provisions of this convention shall not affect the rights at present enjoyed by Chinese subjects being officials, teachers, students, merchants, or travellers, for curiosity or pleasure, but not labourers, of coming to the United States, and reading therein. To entitle such Chinese subjects as are above described to admission into the United States, they may produce a certificate from their government, or the government where they have resided, issued by the diplomatic or consular repres-

more or less interest. It is expected that considerable light will be thrown on Shakespeare's surroundings by the documents. A report concerning them has been made by the Librarian to the Records Committee.

A son of Lord Salisbury has been in Constantinople, Incognito, for one week, and has been received in audience by the Sultan. It is rumoured that he is on a mission from the British Government to the Porte.

The vacant Knighthood of the Garter, has been conferred upon the Marquis of Londonderry, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

PARIS, March 22nd.
The popularity of Boulanger is once more at a high pitch. Nowithstanding all that has recently occurred, he is in a fair way to become the idol of the mob. Circulars have been distributed calling on him to break up the French Parliament and assume the control as director.

The Senate Army Commission, presided over by M. de Freycinet, has prepared a new Recruiting bill. The bill subjects all citizens liable to service for twenty-five years, but provides for various partial exemptions in the case of students and others; imposing, however, taxes upon persons thus exempted. These taxes, it is calculated, will result in a revenue of 5,500,000 francs yearly. The bill also provides that all sons of parents born in France are liable to service, whether naturalized or not.

WINNIPEG, March 22nd.
The Saskatchewan *Herald* again gives a note of warning in the issue of this week of the impending half-breed troubles in the Northwest. It says the Indians are becoming more communicative and talk freely of the coming revolt, but while doing so, say that whatever trouble will be of their own causing. They say the whites must tell them they must rise, and they are afraid they will do as they are bidden. Some after say they will only take up arms in the event of an uprising in the south, an event which they are pretty sure will occur, when they feel like going to their assistance. It is not claimed the Indians that the half breeds are seeking any further rights, but are hankering after revenge for their former defeat.

A FEARFUL CONFLAGRATION PEKING.

A fire, the like of which has not been witnessed during the last twenty or thirty years for its magnitude and destructive results, occurred in Peking on the night of the 6th instant, outside of the Front Gate, and in the very midst of the business portion of the city. The fire began at a quarter to 10 o'clock in a tea-store called the *Chien Tai Tien*. For some unknown reason, the upper-story of this store, where the gods were kept, caught fire, and volumes of smoke were seen rushing out of the windows. Upon this being seen by the passers by in the streets they gave the alarm, and this was the first knowledge the inmates of the shop had of their danger. By this time the fire had made great headway, and as there was a brisk wind blowing at the time, and the building contained combustible materials, the flames were rapidly getting beyond control, and began to spread in all directions. The fire brigade from the Nanchang department soon arrived, but their utmost efforts were of little avail. A bucket toward the east side of the flames spread with fearful rapidity, enveloping the *Tai Lai* tea-store, the *Fien Tai* tea-store, Watson & Co.'s dispensary, the *Tung Lin* Tang drug store, and a large number of other shops, among which were a clothing store, a clock and watch store, a wine store, and several restaurants. On the north side the fire destroyed quite a number of buildings, including two butchers shops. Toward the west the fire spread from the Kwan Yin nursery all the way to the *Tai Ho* dispensary, with terrible power and destruction, and not one of the shops that came within its reach escaped. On the opposite side, the flames, ragged with uncontrolled fury, and carried everything before their way, their destructive progress not being checked until they had consumed between ten and twenty buildings. The fire burned till after 1 o'clock, when, partly through the efforts of the fire brigades, and partly because there were no more buildings in the way for the flames to consume, it began to subside, and was finally extinguished. Nearly forty buildings were totally destroyed, and over two hundred were partially burned or singed. Robbery and plunder were attempted while the goods were being removed, and in many cases with success. One of the foreign goods stores, which had adopted a very precautionary measure, escaped loss. They prepared a large pit in the yard behind their shop, and as soon as the alarm of fire was given they removed all their goods to this pit, and in this manner escaped either being plundered or burned. — *Chinese Times*.

